

N. 9
Memorial of the
buried in Great Britain
and Ireland. Printed
M E M O I R S

OF AN

UNFORTUNATE

Y O U N G L A D Y;

WHICH APPEARED IN

NUMBERS IV. V. and VI.

OF THE

C I T I Z E N:

PUBLISHED IN

THE BRISTOL MERCURY.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

A P O E M,

Recommendatory of the laudable Design to establish an
ASYLUM in this CITY.

Quis talia fando, temperet a Lachrymis?

Who can such woes relate or hear
Without a sympathetic tear?

B R I S T O L:

Printed and sold by Messrs. BULGIN and ROSSER; sold
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and by the Newscarriers.

M. D C C. X C.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE following Narration, in Numbers 4, 5, and 6, of the *CITIZEN*, having been deemed interesting and useful by many; and having occasioned an extra demand for the Newspapers in which it was published, and which are all sold; it has been judged proper to present it to the public in a pamphlet, as a warning to young ladies, dear to their parents and to society, not to deviate from purity and duty.

This account was suitably brought forth to the world in a time when some honorable and generous characters of this city, were exerting themselves to provide a resource for those of the erroneous fair, who shall be sensible enough of their errors, and the misery consequent on them, readily and thankfully to embrace an opportunity of fitting themselves for the sober and reputable walks of life. As such an institution will prove the worthy benevolence of its promoters, and be undoubtedly beneficial to some of its objects, it is hoped that it will be brought on to completion and continued utility.

Parents may learn from this history, to inspect the reading of their children of both sexes ; and young ladies may be supplied with
a caution,

a caution, not to receive or procure books which tend to debase and corrupt their minds, and to hurry them on to the low vulgarity and infamy of prostitution, and bring them to mental and corporeal misery and ruin.

And all may learn—that after an entrance on, and continuance in a course of vice and obliquity of action, it is extremely difficult to recede. The language of Scripture to this purpose is very emphatical: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots! So can they who have been accustomed to do evil learn to do good.*” Therefore may all young persons, in this large city, full of snares and temptations, beware of forsaking their duty, and bidding defiance to their friends; lest they suffer like this young woman, whose
state,

state was much more deplorable than is represented in the subsequent account.

————— *Facilis descensus Averni*

*Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad Auras
Hoc opus, hic labor est.*

Easy to Hell the downward road ;
But, to tread back the steps we've trod,
T' emerge from sin, and nobly rise,
And mount, at last, our native skies ;
This is an arduous work indeed !
(Oh may it not our strength exceed.)

MEMOIRS



MEMOIRS

OF AN

Unfortunate YOUNG LADY, &c.

SIR,

AS after I had fully convinced you that I really detested my former way of life, and that I was sincere in my professions to you of reformation, you desired me to draw up some short account of myself, and the cause of my early falling from virtue; in compliance with your request, I have done it as well as it is in my power to do, and hope you will excuse imperfections.

A. 4

My

My father was a man of a reputable profession, and resided many years in one of the principal streets in this city ;—both my parents were sober and religious persons, and dissenters. I was the youngest of several children. My father took particular care that we should learn to read and to write well, and it is to that paternal care that I owe the ability of expressing myself tolerably to you.

When I was very young, I was so unfortunate as to get an acquaintance with two girls who lived in the *Old Market*, who were older than me, and very bold, wild and corrupt companions. These girls seemed to take a particular fancy to make me so bad as themselves, and to initiate me into the knowledge of indecency and vice. They were great readers—and procured for themselves, and lent to me several books that were *too bad* indeed, and had the most ruinous tendency. To mention their titles is needless, and might be injurious to any who may see this account. I do not know whether or not the keepers of Circulating Libraries let out such books at this time—but

I am sure that such poisonous trash were then to be borrowed, though at some extraordinary prices, for I was sometimes sent to procure them. And, Sir, I think I have had reason enough to caution the librarians of Bristol, concerning the books they lend to young women, who very frequently while their parents flatter themselves that they are improving their minds, are preparing themselves for licentiousness and misery. I doubt not that almost so many girls have been seduced by books as by men. These companions of mine were indefatigable in procuring a continual supply of such infernal volumes, and in imparting and conversing about them to me. Infamous song-books, histories, memoirs, trials, plays, and jest-books were poured in upon me. In time we all became inured to the most improper conversation, and to a freedom and boldness of behaviour that made us noted and censured by our acquaintance, and the whole neighbourhood. My partners in folly professed, and were determined by their conduct to make it known, that they cared not what became of them. This appearing plainly enough to some
of

of the young fellows who kept us company in the evenings—as our sense of virtue and honor were read away—the total loss of them soon followed—and at an age which I shall not mention, but long before I had completed my growth, I was brought into the high road to destruction.

Oh ! may all parents who have daughters to educate, see that they read nothing but what has a tendency to increase their knowledge and virtue : and may every young lady who has any regard for her honor or comfort in life, frown from her presence the dearest of her companions who would offer her any thing to read, that bears the image or superscription of immorality.

One of my frail sisters was lucky enough to meet with a man, who liked, courted, and married her ; the other continued with me in the same course of life, and having little or no restraint from her friends, became every day more free in her practices, and endeavoured to persuade several of her female acquaintance

to

to imitate her example. On one she prevailed, who is now on the town, and is, I fancy, a stranger to remorse and to that conviction of error, that might bring her to repentance. Though both of us were so young, yet we made a desperate resolution to get privately acquainted with some of the most open and shameless of the sisterhood—this we easily effected. This connexion introduced us to drinking and to keeping late hours, and even to walking about with two or three abandoned girls, who brought us to glory in transgression, and to set all rules and friends at defiance.

Returning home sometimes late and nearly intoxicated, I began to be suspected and interrogated by my parents and sisters, who for the present suffered me to do just as I pleased, but (as I afterwards found) watched my whole conduct, walks, haunts and companions with their strictest attention: a full discovery of my way of life was soon the consequence. My father, a pious man, seemed as if thunderstruck, and had scarcely power to open his lips to me. My mother and sisters proceeded to severities, which

which I have often thought were injudicious, though perhaps, well intended. After searching all my room, and taking away some very bad books that I had hidden, they reproached, railed at me, and called me by such vulgar names as are very disagreeable to women. Nay, they even proceeded to beat me, kept me almost without victuals, and confined me in a room for some weeks, till hunger and grief had almost broken my heart. When they perceived that I was much tamed, very submissive, and also greatly injured in my constitution, they began to allow me more victuals, and to give me the liberty of coming down an hour or two in the day—but not of going into the street.

Their treatment, which indeed was too cruel, made me hate my relations and their abode, and I was resolved to take the first opportunity to leave them. One evening I ventured to stand just within the door, and seeing a young gentleman of my acquaintance passing by, I whispered to him, and told him to stay below, at the end of the street, and I would come

to him very soon. Being not watched at that time, I took a hat of one of my sisters, went out, met this person, and related all my treatment. After having taken a long walk with him in various parts of the town, as he was conducting me home, we were discovered by two of my sisters who were out on the search after me, and who forcibly took me from him, and violently and incessantly beat me from *Castle-Ditch* to our own door.

They then reassumed their severity—I was again confined and half-starved for some time, and afterward sent to a place of confinement in Gloucestershire. Though I am now fully sensible of my folly, yet I cannot think that these severities were right, for I quite detested them and my friends who inflicted them, and had proceeded to immure me in the country. Had they endeavoured to draw me to duty and honor by reason, affection and love, perhaps they might have prevailed. God only knows; but they were cruel, and I was determined to be free from their tyranny.

From

From the time of the discovery of my companions and practices, my father said less to me than did the rest of our family, though I have reason to believe that he took it to heart more than any of them. After my return from the country he seldom saw me; and if he accidentally met me about the house, he turned away his head, as if ashamed to look at me. Several times I observed him, when he happened to glance me any where—to lift up his hands and eyes, and to hasten out of the way; I supposed that he was either praying for me, or expressing his astonishment to Heaven, at my so early deviation from virtue.—I was now sensible that I had been drawn into error, and that I had disgraced the family, for my character was notorious and almost a town talk—but yet I fullenly and obstinately wished to be free from my relations, and to do as I had done before. However my vicious inclinations soon received a dreadful check from the illness and death of my father.

Whether from grief about me, or from some other cause, he was seized with a fatal fever. When his case became very dangerous, he de-
fired

fired to see all his children. Conscious of my being an offender, I would gladly have been excused, though I did not know that I should see him alive any more—but I was forced to go up with my sisters. Oh! to the most hardened child it must be an alarming sight, to see a parent with a “mortal paleness on his cheeks.” —When I looked at him, my knees trembled under me; and not venturing to peep again, I retreated behind the rest. I fancy that his fever was of the phrenical sort, for he eagerly expressed himself in very strong terms to my sisters, and made several severe reflexions on me. After he had done speaking to them, he said, in a very low tone of voice—*Where is —? on which my sisters moved aside, and I stood before him like a conscious criminal before a Judge. He once looked at me; and as he had often done before, immediately averted his eyes; and, so soon as he could recover breath, exclaimed——So early ruined! Oh what shall I say to her—Gracious God—what have I done—that my youngest child,—not yet years of age, should be a common w——. I saw him going to pronounce the last word, but*
before

before he uttered it, I bursted out into a violent fit of crying, and at length had power to say—*Dear, dear father, for Heaven's sake spare me.*—To which he replied, with his eyes fixed on the floor, and with a look that indicated mortal vexation—*Repent, repent, and may the Lord forgive thee, and turn thy heart.*—*Oh ! let her not be with her sisters—I am dying, and this kills me faster !—It is too much—Go away, and repent !*—On which I withdrew, and I need not say much afflicted, and more so, when I found that he could not bear to see me again, and had ordered my sisters not to admit me to his presence.

When I heard that he was dying, I earnestly requested to see him for only one minute, and to speak to him my intention of behaving well for the future—but was denied ; for my mother said that another sight of me would send him out of the world raving—In three days after our interview he died ; and I took it all so much to heart, that I was scarcely in my senses ; but, however, was determined for the future to live and be like my sisters ; for I could not
bear

bear the thought of that odious epithet which I saw my father just going to bestow on me.

I was indeed seriously and excessively grieved—and I observed that my mother seemed to regard me with some return of affection, which a little comforted me. Decent mourning was ordered for me, as well as for my sisters; and the Sunday after my dear and good father's interment, by my mother's desire, I went to our Meeting-house, and heard a very useful and pathetic funeral discourse, in which the Minister expressed his wish that the children might follow the innocent, useful, and pious life of the deceased father, and which I was determined to strive to do.

Soon after this we were visited by our pastor, who (I suppose) in consequence of some hints from my mother, took me aside, and gave me good advice—to be always employed in doing something that was right, and to avoid bad company, which (he said) had brought many young persons of both sexes to ruin. I was in some degree sensible of the truth and

B

propriety

propriety of what he had mentioned to me, and endeavoured to demean myself as well as I could; though I confess that I now and then felt a hankering after my former companions and indulgencies, and particularly after strong liquors, which I two or three times met with, and privately indulged myself in till discovered, and they were put out of my way. However, as I had not offended in any other instance, hopes of my complete amendment were entertained, and some liberties allowed me—to walk out now and then, and to go to the Meeting-house to hear a lecture in the week. This service I several times attended, and duly returned home, not meeting with any temptation to deviate. My friends had dropped all severities, and I was coming into a proper style of living.

One evening my mother, who was always very solicitous that I should hear preaching, put me in mind of the meeting, and begged me to go, though my sisters could not; and carefully to attend to the minister—that I might practise what I should hear.—I set out in the dusk

dusk of the evening, and unfortunately met that young man with whom I had walked before, who was a clerk to a merchant, and who expressed the greatest pleasure to see me at liberty. When I told him where I was going, he earnestly importuned me to leave the divine service, and to take a walk with him about the city. To this I consented, though against my knowledge and conscience, and once more plunged myself into sin and infamy.—My companion (I cannot now call him my friend) behaved in the kindest manner—took me into a pastry-shop, in *Clare-street*, and presented me with some of the nicest delicacies that the shop afforded, and begged me to recover my spirits, and to eat and be happy. He then asked me to drink a glass of cordial, to which I was too prone: As I did not refuse, we both descended a cellar on *St. Augustine's Back*, where I was easily prevailed on to do as I had frequently done—to drink one glass of stuff after another, till I was light-headed, and too much intoxicated to speak or act with propriety. However, I did not forget the melancholy circumstances attending my father's illness and death,

his last advice, and my own convictions and penitence. While I was giving him a confused and incoherent account of these, accompanied with sobs and tears, partly the effects of the liquor that I had drank—after we had walked about an hour, I remember that we were in *Cumberland-street*. There I expressed a fear of meeting my sisters, as I had exceeded the time of preaching, and was apprehensive that they might be again out after me.—I had not yet finished my narration, and being very desirous to do it, my conductor took me to a corner of *Brunswick-square*, where lay materials for building. On these he proposed that we should rest ourselves, as being in a place where we should elude all search; and here, in the midst of my story, produced to a tedious length and repetition, by the influence of the spirits, he made an easy triumph over all my convictions and resolutions. He then freely proposed to me to leave my family entirely, in which he said I should always be looked on as an inferior, and made a slave. He offered to lead me to a house, where I should be free and happy, and to allow me so much a week for maintenance.

In

In an evil hour I consented; but before we arrived at the place of our destination, he took care that we should pay another visit to the Cellar, to raise our spirits a little higher. This being done, he brought me to a house not far from *College-street*; and introduced me to a young lady very finely dressed, who I found was the mistress: to her he related my case, and proposed my residence with her family. The lady very freely and civilly consented, and said—that if Miss —— should chuse their way of life—she was sure she could not be better accommodated in *Bristol*.

Soon after two other young ladies arrived with their temporary lovers culled from the streets. Supper and liquors were provided—drunkenness and folly were the consequences; and thus was I (through acting in opposition to conscience, and through the baneful power of strong drink), as it were, devoted to prostitution, infamy, and perdition, unless reclaimed and saved by the miraculous interposition of divine power and mercy.

My companion continued to behave with some kind attention to me, and rather exceeded than fell short of his promises. He visited me two or three times a week, and when he came, generally spent the evening and night with me. Indeed his attachment appeared to be so sincere, that I began to put confidence in him as a friend, and to promise myself great things from him. After I had been in this house of dissipation for some days, the lady of it hinted to me—that the visits of my friend need not hinder me from receiving others, which would increase her and my income, and which could not sometimes be dispensed with, as she had but three girls including me. I acted in conformity to this advice, but with some caution that I might not disgust my keeper. Soon after, in an evening in which we had no company, she desired me to show myself in town, with the other ladies; and when I urged against this, the fear of my relations and of a discovery, as being in mourning—she had me immediately dressed out in other gaudy cloaths, of which she had a great plenty; and thus, with my companions and our governess,

ness, I fell into all the practices and vices of a genteel street-walker, and girl of the town, using no reserve, but with respect to my introducer to this very debauched and irregular family, who were generally up half the night and abed half the day, and drunk half their time.

One afternoon, while I was upstairs dressing myself, our Governess called me, and desired that I would step down directly, and come into the parlour.—I ran down as fast as I could, expecting some new lover—but what was my surprise to find myself standing before!—my venerable and afflicted mother, who sat in silence, wiping the tears from her eyes, and I too was unable to speak a word.—At length the mistress of the house said—“ It
 “ seems, Miss, that this good lady is your
 “ mother, and that by some means she has
 “ found out your lodging ;—and though to be
 “ sure I like your company very well—and
 “ you are a very fit person for our profession,
 “ and agreeable to the gentlemen who come
 “ here—yet, if you chuse to return with your
 B 4 “ mother,

“ mother, don’t let me hinder you—for though
 “ our business may be tolerable to live by, yet
 “ *to be sure it is not so good to die by*, as your
 “ mother observed, and therefore, Miss, do
 “ just as you please.”—I had gone too far to
 think of receding, and trusting in my keeper,
 and determined to lead a life of pleasure—
 I said, “ that I had rather stay, and begged
 “ that my mother would not trouble herself
 “ about me any more.” On which she wept
 bitterly, and said—“ How can you give your-
 “ self up to such a life ?”—I answered, “ that
 “ I would not go home to be used ill by her
 “ and my sisters, and that—by my soul, I
 “ *would stay there.*” An answer which I shall
 repent as long as I live. On which I cruelly
 left my mother, who soon after went weeping
 away, and I had no more visits from any of
 my relations.

For this behavior to my parent, I was in a
 short time properly rewarded by him in whom
 I trusted as a friend.—One evening a genteel
 young lad followed me from *Clare-street* to our
 house, and, at my invitation, immediately ran
 up

up stairs with me. Just after this my keeper came and inquired for me; and being informed that I was in my room dressing myself, and should be down in a few minutes, he would not wait, but came up hastily, and found the young man in company with me; on which he was, or pretended to be, in the most violent passion, used the most horrid names and execrations, and so affrighted the youth that he ran down stairs and out of the house. A dreadful quarrel then ensued between my companion and me, who charged me with ingratitude, and cursed and swore, and railed at me most shockingly. In return I did not spare him; and happening to provoke him too much, he pulled and beat me about in such an inhuman manner, that I was ill and kept my bed for several days; and have marks that I shall carry to the grave. He never visited me again, and thus I lost a false friend, for whom I wickedly gave up a true one—my own affectionate mother.

But this was but the beginning of sorrows:
I went on to such excesses in debauchery, that
my

my constitution suffered, and my person began to lose its attractions; this occasioned our worthy mistress to look coldly on me, and to give me intimations of my removal. When she found that I was no longer profitable, she so palpably neglected and affronted me, that having no other home, I began almost to despair. And to add to my affliction, I found that a horrid disorder had made such an injurious, though gradual and almost imperceptible progress, that I could no longer expect notice in our line of life. A removal was then advised, to which I found it necessary to consent, and which was effected by the assistance of an old worn out wretch who plied at our house, to a little court in the *Old Orchard*. Having some money, I procured medical assistance; and at last, at the hazard of my life, was cured of the worst of maladies, from which I came out a figure like death, and little more than skin and bones.

During my illness, I had time to reflect on my own ill conduct; but as I grew better in body, I grew more hardened in mind, and set
up

up for company in *Philadelphia-street*, which I found not so convenient for a decoy. From thence I shifted from one part of the town to another, in various circumstances, in *Marlborough* and *Eugene* streets, the *Black-parade*, and several other places, most generally attended by the old woman I have mentioned.—I shall not repeat the tricks I used to draw in the unwary, or my too frequent success, for I must be brief. It will be sufficient to say to you—that my unusually vicious way of life, decline of person, and contamination of body, brought me into that miserable condition in which you found me in the Court in the *Horse-Fair*, after I had taken the liberty of addressing a line to you. I had pawned and sold every thing I had, except an old pair of stays, a petticoat and a gown—and was like a skeleton, fitter to be in the ground than above it, being almost starved with hunger and cold, and having no creature to help me but the old woman who brought my letter to you.

I am now, Sir, deeply sensible of the destructive nature of debauchery, having sufficient

cient proof of it in my own unhappy person ; and find by sad experience, that if we transgress the rules that our Creator has given to us, we are in the way to real misery. I am sincerely sorry that I have for several years lived such a sinful life ; and should be very thankful could I be introduced into a sober family, in which I might, without reproaches, be of some service. But alas ! who will—indeed who can, trust girls of our character ? Even benevolent people, who might wish us reformation and happiness, would fear for the peace of their families, and the preservation of their property, were they to admit such as we are into their service.

I long to return (if it were God's gracious will) to a sober and useful course of living.—I have been in the broad way to ruin, and affliction and punishment have taught me to wish to be turned into the narrow way of peace and salvation. Methinks I could fly to the house of God—to adore and pray to him, to hear his holy word preached, and to join (unworthy sinner as I am) in his blessed praises.

I have heard with rapture, that some charitable Gentlemen of this city have proposed the building of an Asylum for such penitent Magdalens as I am. Heaven grant that their endeavours may not be unsuccessful, and that the scheme may be carried into full execution! Depend on it, Sir, that could you get me admitted into this abode of penitence, piety and reformation, the institutors of this charity, and you, should have a lasting return from me of inexpressible thanks and gratitude. Were the Gentlemen aware of the increasing number of young women in *Bristol*, who give themselves up to idleness and wickedness, and of the unhappy lives led by most of them, the design would be sooner accomplished. And should their kind endeavours to get an Asylum for us, be the means of saving a few souls from impending destruction—the blessings of those who are ready to perish would come upon them in time and eternity.—For, as I read in the book of God, which (blessed be his holy name) I make my daily study, “ He
 “ that converteth a sinner from the error of
 “ of his ways, shall save a soul from death, and
 “ hide

“hide a multitude of sins.” And also in *Daniel*, “They that be wise shall shine as the
“brightness of the firmament, and they that
“turn many to righteousness, as the stars for
“ever and ever.” I am, Sir, with many thanks
for your condescending kindnesses, and my
best wishes to the Gentlemen who are pro-
moting a resource for deluded and deluding
women, Your most humble Servant,

A FEMALE PENITENT.

Bristol, May 11, 1790.

The public may be certified that this is a
true account of an unhappy young woman—
though somewhat corrected and improved.

——— *Eā nihil est naturæ hominis accommodatius, & in
hominum genere nulla melior est natura, quam eorum, qui se
natos ad homines juvandos, tutandos, conservandos arbi-
trantur.*

There is nothing more agreeable to the nature of man than
beneficence; and there is no better disposition in man-
kind, than that of those generous persons—who think
themselves born to assist, to defend from evil, and to
save their fellow creatures.

THE P O E M.

Propositum nobis esse debet Deorum exemplum sequi.

It ought to be our supreme object to imitate the divine example.

If you think that the following lines, may have any ten-
dency to promote the establishment of an Asylum, for the
present and future benefit of the unfortunate Fair, you
are at liberty to insert them in your publication. G. H.

George Heath.

THE infinite, eternal Name,
Great Author of the human frame,
Knows that frail men are prone
In mind and action to transgress;
For ever-perfect righteousness,
Pertains to him alone.

He knows that our imperfect state
Some moral errors must create;
Nor does, with vengeful ire,
Bid the whole world of sinners burn,
And all to dust and ashes turn,
By his consuming fire.

He still affords preserving Grace;
Supplies the wants of all our race,
With tender care and love;
He pardons, teaches, guides our feet,
And gently leads us to the seat
Of endless joy above.

While we His great example see,
Oh! may our souls aspire to be
The followers of God:
Gracious, compassionate to all,
Who thro' their nature's frailty fall,
And tread destruction's road.

The softer sex, whom bounteous heaven,
To bear, and bless us here, hath given,
Are not from failings free;
Their and our natures are the same;
They share the weakness of our frame,
Nor their true honor see.

But shall blind men, without remorse
For their own follies, have recourse
To punishments unjust?
Inflict unmanly stripes, or shave
The crinal beauty nature gave;
Or into prison thrust?

Detested conduct! paltry, base,
Discredit to the human race,
It hardens them in sin:
No—take them into pity's arms,
Preserve from dire disease their charms,
And their reform begin.

Conduct them to some calm abode
Where they may make their peace with God,
And duty cultivate;
Where they may learn to lead their lives,
Becoming virtuous girls and wives,
In pure and happy state :

Where they may constantly attend
The praise of their Almighty Friend,
And hear his holy word :
Where they may learn true wisdom's path,
And live in hope of heav'n by faith,
Devoted to the LORD.

Oh! glorious change! from sin to Grace!
From misery to happiness—
From death and hell to heaven!
Thanks to their kind fraternal care
Who to instruct and save the fair—
So liberally have given.

Ye generous souls, with ardent zeal,
Go on to do your Maker's will,
And imitate his love;
Search out the objects of distress,
And give their sorrows quick redress,
When to yon pile* they move.

Come, all you erring, precious Fair!
To perish, sure, too good you are;
Think on the lives you lead;
Can prostitution, drunkenness—
Can swearing, riot—end in peace?
It cannot be indeed.

Come, nobly leave all outward sin,
Dear creatures, come, and enter in!
A door of hope's prepar'd;
If you approach with good intent,
If of your follies you repent,
The door shall ne'er be barr'd.

You'll surely find in virtue, peace;
That wisdom's ways are pleasantness;
And all her votaries blest:
You'll know your God your lasting friend;
He'll save you to the very end;
And give you heavenly rest.

* The Asylum.

